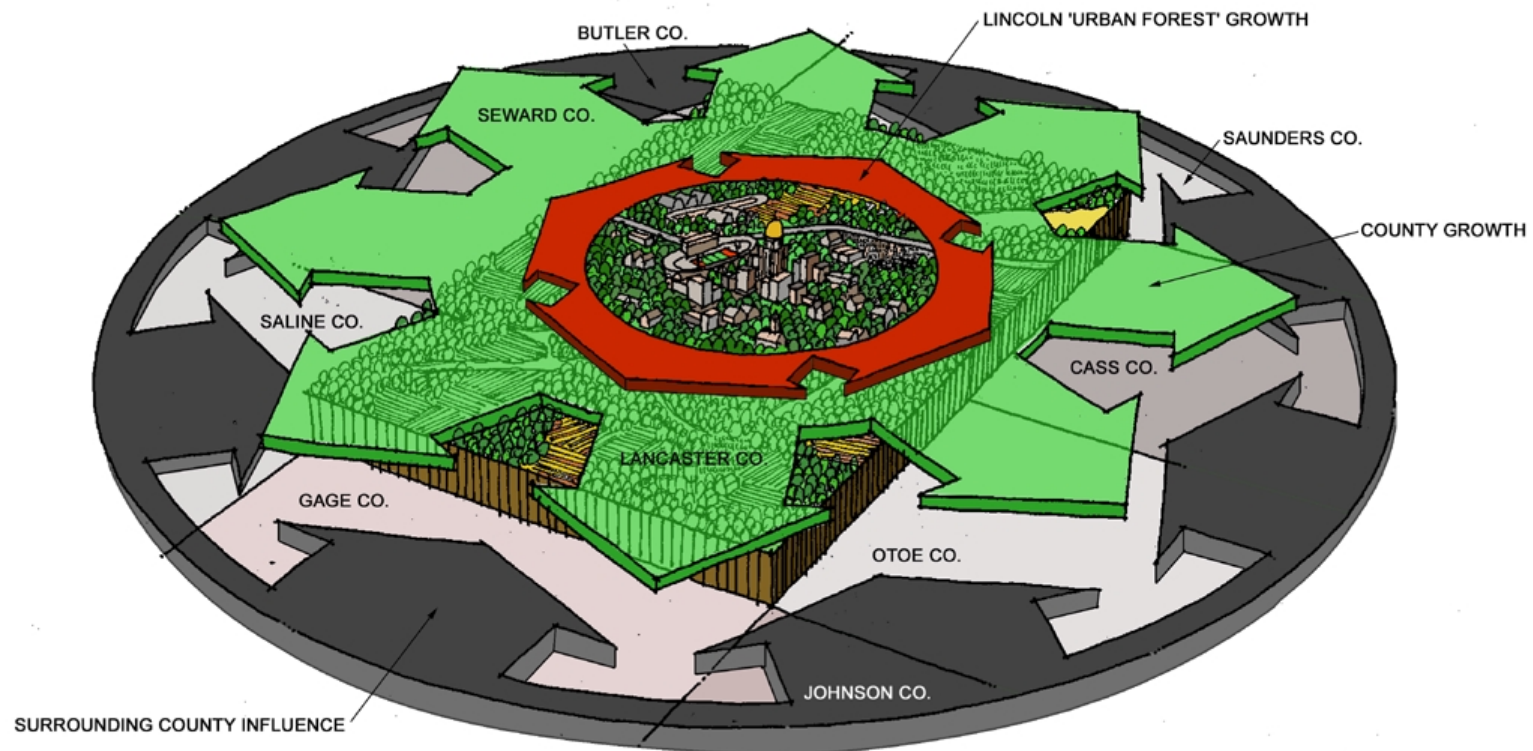


## THREE: GREENPRINT CHALLENGE THEMES

### THE GREENPRINT CHALLENGE SEEKS TO BE BROADLY INCLUSIVE

#### Planning's Impact Extends Beyond the County's Boundaries

- The boundaries that separate Lancaster from Saunders, Cass, Otoe, Gage, Saline and Seward Counties are largely political, not natural.
- Landscape changes that occur between Lancaster and surrounding Counties are relatively minor.
- No major changes occur in the general character of the ecosystem that Lancaster County shares with its neighboring political subdivisions.



### Covergence of Urban and Rural Environmental Concerns

- Resource imperatives dominate the Greenprint Challenge planning platform. Therefore references that distinguish rural issues from urban issues, except as they relate to the imperatives should be minimized.
- Lancaster County's resource base, which is common to all areas of the County, unifies the Greenprint Challenge.
- Urban and rural developments should receive equal priority in the environmental planning process and policies should be established that incorporate the needs of both development communities.

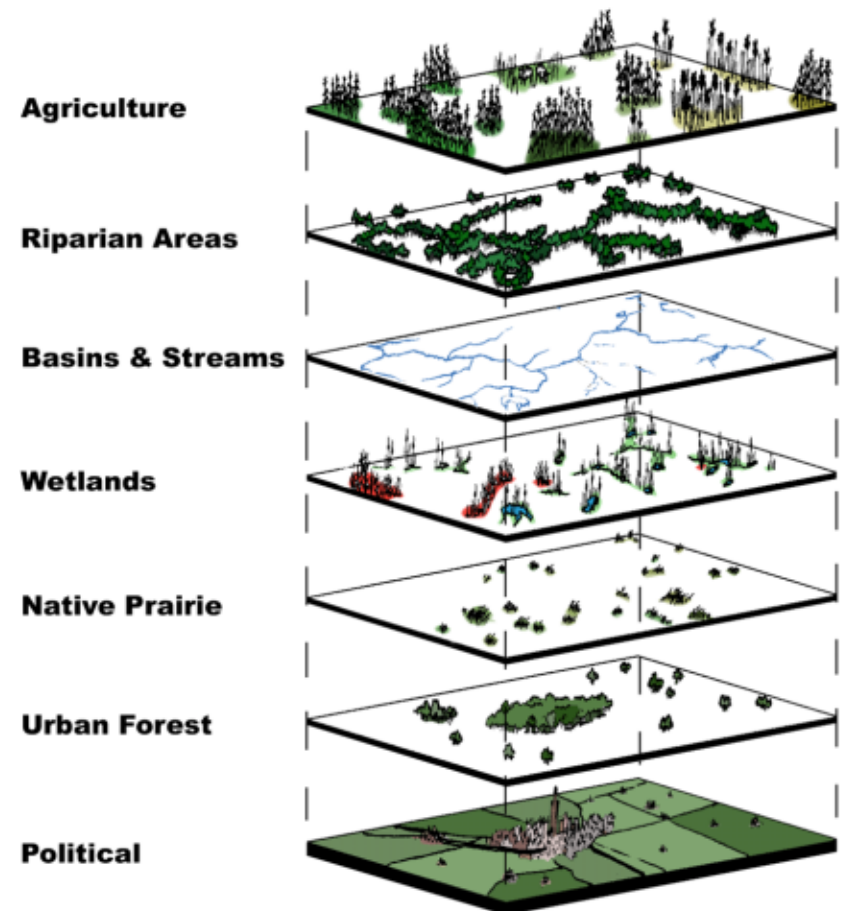
### Build upon Existing Public-Private Alliances and Partnerships

- The Greenprint Challenge encourages the residents of the County to focus primarily on the unique natural resources of the ecosystem, not ownership or use patterns of the land in which the resources exist.
- A strong partnership must exist between the public and private sectors to support the proposed environmental vision of Greenprint.

### Capitalize Upon Both the Environmental and Economic Benefits of Our Community's Natural Assets

- The Greenprint Challenge offers opportunities for development. Through identification of areas worthy of protection, it suggests that development can be focused, in part, in areas outside of the resource imperatives.
- Development and preservation can work together in a context in which both can achieve their goals and objectives concurrently.
- Higher quality, more diverse and more economically beneficial development can take place within the parameters of the Greenprint Challenge.

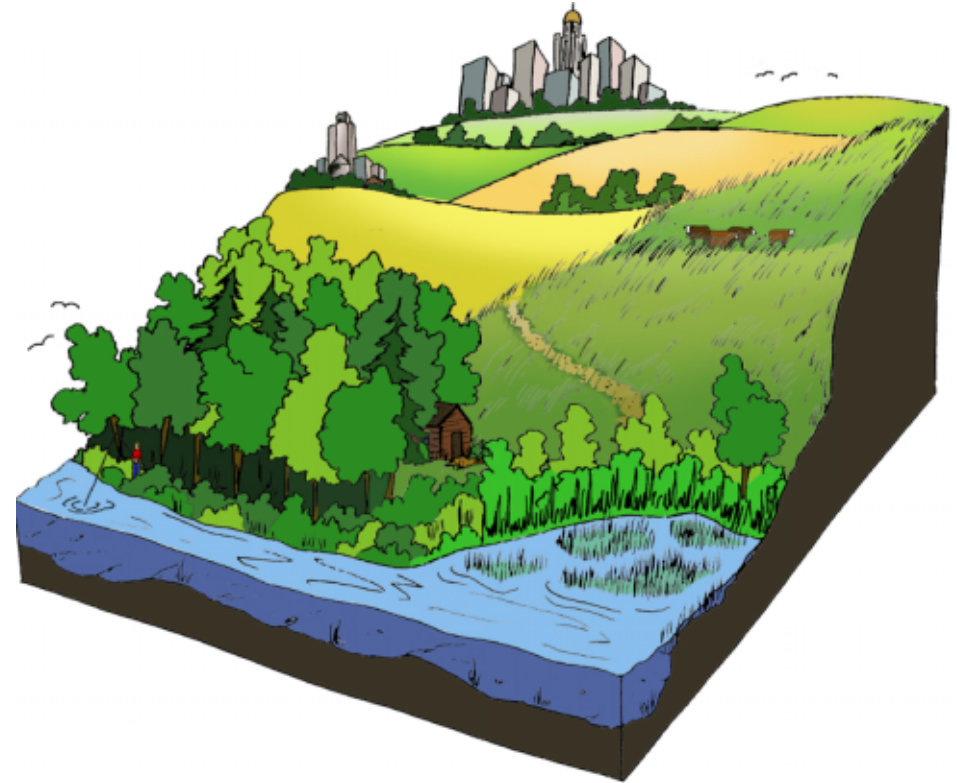
- The Greenprint Challenge endeavors to present a framework that encourages appropriate, sensitive land-use and development in relation to the conservation of natural resources in Lancaster County, and beyond.
- Preserving natural resource features as part of the urban and rural landscape exhibit environmental and economic paybacks (see the National Association of Realtors "Twice Green Results").



### THE GREENPRINT CHALLENGE SUPPORTS MAINTAINING RICHNESS AND DIVERSITY WITHIN THE COUNTY'S URBAN AND RURAL ENVIRONMENTS

#### The County Boasts a Diversity of Natural Resources and Landscape Types

- The County is located in an ecosystem that includes rolling prairies, riparian corridors that bisect the region and provide the framework for natural floodplains, freshwater and saline wetlands, and wooded areas.
- Significant differences occur in the composition and visual characteristics of the Lancaster County landscape.
- Areas of the native, predominant tall-grass prairie landscape that still exist in Lancaster County display plant species such as big bluestem, little bluestem, indiangrass and sideoats grama.
- Numerous native wildflowers and other forbs are present in the County.
- Numerous field crops such as alfalfa, corn, oats, sorghum, soybeans and wheat have been introduced and thrive.
- Historically, bison was the dominant grazing animal species, but now, white-tailed deer is the most abundant large grazing wildlife species. Cattle and other domesticated species also thrive in the County.
- Numerous native bird species inhabit Lancaster County including prairie chickens, horned lark and western meadowlark. Migrating waterfowl and various shorebirds also visit the County's wetlands.
- Several landscape types that are unique to Lancaster County such as native prairie and saline wetlands that support threatened and endangered species are emphasized in the Greenprint Challenge.



#### The County is Home to a Distinctive Association of Threatened or Endangered Plants and Animals

- Several species of wetland plants such as Saltwort, (aka Western Glasswort), and the Western Prairie Fringed Orchid are endangered and threatened, respectively.
- The Salt Creek Tiger Beetle and the Massasauga Rattle Snake are threatened and endangered species, respectively, found in Lancaster County.

### **Maintenance of Natural Features Recognizes the Individual Context Within Which They Reside**

- Lancaster County exhibits a wide range of rural and urban settings, including native or naturalized landscapes located away from cities, farmsteads and low density residential areas, small cities (as measured by land area and population), and a highly urbanized, metropolitan area.
- Resource imperatives that require a certain separation from development should be accorded that separation and protection.
- Appropriate levels of activity and access should be developed for various natural features, including zero, or limited access; passive activity; or high, active accessibility, depending on the capacity of the area to sensitively support activity.
- Greenprint supports various land ownership and management responsibilities, including public and private interests.
- Appropriate levels of management and maintenance should be developed for the components of Greenprint. Different levels of maintenance may be necessary even within single resource imperatives such as parks where high maintenance may be required for some urban settings while minimal maintenance may be required for other areas.

### **THE GREENPRINT FOCUSES ATTENTION ON UNIQUE LANDSCAPES IN THE COUNTY**

#### **Candidate “Signature Landscapes” Defined**

- A signature landscape supplies much of the sense of who we are. It serves as a constant reminder of the particular ecosystem that forms our economic base, and it provides the visual images that remind us of our history and the way we must work with our resource base in order to sustain our culture.

- Obvious County landscapes that rise to “signature” status include remnants of native tallgrass prairie, wetlands (with special emphasis on saline wetlands), and other biological communities that support Federal and State threatened and endangered species.

#### **Establishment and Management of “Signature Landscapes”**

- The long-term viability of the County’s signature landscape components should be ensured. These places should be afforded attention and care.
- The City of Lincoln and other urban areas are embedded in the Lancaster County landscape. The unique characteristics of the urban fabric and signature landscape components must be valued.

